

TO THE BARNARD CASTLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1909.

GENTLEMEN,

I.

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1909. The Mortality Statistics show an improvement of those of the preceding year—eighty death having been registered as against eighty-seven in 1908. Out of the eighty deaths seventeen were of persons belonging to other districts and only brought for treatment in the local Workhouse Infirmary, and so reducing the deaths of residents to 63. On the other hand three persons belonging to Barnard Castle died in the County Asylum, at Sedgfield, whose deaths have to be added to the local ones, thus the actual deaths of residents during the year numbered sixty-six, producing the low rate of mortality of 14·43 per 1,000 of an estimated population of 4,572.

The Infantile Mortality was about the same as during the preceding year—nine deaths having been registered under the age of one year, giving a rate of 1·96 per 1,000 inhabitants, and 92·76 per 1,000 births registered.

Forty-three deaths occurred amongst persons over 65 years of age, the oldest having been a male and female aged respectively 94 and 90 years.

Zymotic or Infectious Diseases caused four deaths, namely :—

Measles	...	...	...	...	1 death
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	1 „
Croup...	...	...	...	...	1 „
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	1 „

Total 4 deaths

giving an annual Zymotic death-rate of 0·87 per 1,000 of estimated population.

Diseases of the Respiratory Organs caused ten deaths, or 2·18 per 1,000 of population.

Phthisis and other Tubercular Diseases caused eight deaths, or 1·74 per 1,000.

Heart Disease accounted for the deaths of twenty-two persons, of whom fifteen were over 65 years of age.

Ten deaths were ascribed to Cancer.

Ninety-seven births were registered during the year, or 21·21 per 1,000 of population.

For purposes of comparison the following table may be interesting :—

						Local Rates per 1,000.		County Rates.
						1909.	1908.	1909.
Birth-rate	...	...	...	...	...	21·21	23·27	35·5
Death-rate	...	...	...	...	...	14·43	17·08	15·7
Zymotic Death-rate	...	...	...	...	...	0·87	...	1·61
Acute Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	2·18	...	2·38
Phthisis or other Tubercular Disease	...	...	...	...	...	1·74	...	0·85
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 births registered)	...	...	...	...	...	92·76	91·74	124

II.

As regards the amount of sickness in the town I find on looking over my quarterly reports that, with the only exception of the third quarter, it was high during the whole course of the year, and was mainly of the nature of Influenza, with consequent acute Affection of the Lungs.

There was also a considerable prevalence of Infectious disease—chiefly Measles, Mumps and Whooping Cough amongst children. The cases that came under the “Infectious Diseases Notification Act” were twenty-one in number, namely :—

Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	16 cases
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	2 „
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	1 case
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	2 cases

Total 21 cases

The cases of Diphtheria occurred principally in the North Eastern County School whence eleven cases were notified during the first quarter of the year. I am sorry I was not able satisfactorily to determine the source of the Infection, although I firmly believe that it was imported into the School by some boy, as the first case was detected very soon after the commencement of a new term.

The other five cases occurred in the town and the Workhouse (one case). The cause of these was found to be exposure to defective sanitary arrangements in the respective dwellings.



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It is very satisfactory to note that only two cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year—both of these occurred in the Militia Barracks and were at once removed for treatment and isolation to the Council's Infectious Hospital.

The one case of Enteric Fever occurred in an old house in Bridgegate and was probably caused by sanitary defects in the dwelling.

With regard to Measles I am sorry to say it has been almost endemic during the whole of the year, the number of cases being at times so great as to necessitate the closure of some of the Day Schools. I am glad the Council has decided to make this disease again notifiable, as the detection of the first cases might have a tendency to limit the extent of an epidemic.

Whooping Cough, Chicken-Pox, and Mumps were also considerably prevalent amongst children, particularly in the early part of the year.

I am glad to say that there was very little Diarrhœa amongst children.

III.

The general Sanitation of the town and the methods adopted for the preservation of the public health have received considerable attention during the past year. Assisted by your Inspector, I have continued my house-to-house inspection of the town, our object being to detect and report to you any case of sanitary defect, or overcrowding, particularly in the tenement houses occupied by the working class population. As a result of this inspection, I had occasion to recommend you to close twenty-one houses owing to their unfitness for human habitation on account of structural and sanitary defects or of overcrowding. I also brought to your notice several instances of foul and unsanitary privy middens, and recommended that these be converted into W.C.'s, and that these latter be increased in number where they were found to be inadequate.

I am glad to say that steps have been and are being taken in order to carry these recommendations into effect.

In connection with the drainage and sewerage of the town, I beg to report a continued improvement; but something will still have to be done at the lower part of the town to prevent occasional flooding. The drainage system at the Workhouse has been entirely relaid and improved.

The Sewage Farm has been efficiently worked and has answered its requirements.

The water supply of the town has continued to be good both as regards quantity and quality.

With regard to house accommodation, nine new houses have been erected in the district during the year, and two of these have been occupied.

The Dairies and Cowsheds, of which latter there are only four registered ones in the town, have all been periodically inspected, and overcrowding and improper ventilation noticed in those owned by Foster and Hebden.

There are eight registered Slaughter Houses in your district. They have been regularly inspected by me and most of them found to be kept clean, and I have had to draw your attention to sanitary improvements requisite only in the case of four of them.

The methods for dealing with Infectious Diseases have continued adequate and satisfactory. The Isolation Hospital has been called into requisition on one occasion, only for the treatment of two cases of Scarlet Fever from the Militia Barracks. The additional wing has not yet been erected. A new and up-to-date Horse Ambulance has, I am glad to say, been provided. I should also like to see the recommendations of the Assistant County Medical Officer of Health carried out with regard to the erection of a disinfecting apparatus for large articles such as bedding, etc.

During the past year your Inspector has had occasion to disinfect four dwelling-houses and destroy four lots of infected bedding.

In connection with the Workshops and Factory Act no cases of nuisance have been brought to my notice.

During the year the Sanitary Inspector has had occasion to bring the following nuisances to your notice:—

Nuisances in connection with Dwelling-houses	...	...	...	2 cases
" " Water Closets	...	...	...	3 "
" from Defective Yard Paving	...	...	...	1 case
" in connection with House Drainage	...	...	...	24 cases
" " Water Supply	...	...	...	62 "
" Unclassified	...	...	...	2 "
Total				94 cases

All of these, with the exception of two, have been remedied.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

ALFRED H. SEVIER,

Medical Officer of Health.

